

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

DATE: MARCH 2, 2009

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS TAYLOR
BELDEN
CHAMPAGNE
MERLINO
STEC
SOKOL
PITKIN

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:
PATRICIA TATICH, DIRECTOR
WAYNE LAMOTHE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
JAMIE WHITE, SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR
REPRESENTING WARREN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION:
LEONARD FOSBROOK, PRESIDENT
JENNIFER SWITZER, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE/EMPIRE ZONE
SPECIALIST
FREDERICK MONROE, CHAIRMAN
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ATTORNEY
HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL SERVICES
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISOR STRAINER
SUPERVISOR THOMAS
MIKE BORGOS, PRESIDENT OF THE WARREN COUNTY LOCAL
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
SKIP STRANAHAN, WARREN COUNTY RESIDENT
JONATHAN ALEXANDER, *THE ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*
CHARLENE DiRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Taylor called the meeting of the Planning & Community Development Committee to order at 10:28 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Patricia Tatich, Director of the Planning & Community Development Department, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Proceeding with the pending items, Ms. Tatich stated, that the first pending item pertained to the Adirondack Community Housing Trust (ACHT). She said that funds were available from the Adirondack Park Agency to complete a new hamlet study. She advised that the Village of Saranac Lake had received Technical Assistance funding from the State to be used for a housing inventory and they were considering using the ACHT format for the inventory work and some of the programs.

Wayne LaMothe, Assistant Director of the Planning & Community Development Department,

said that the second pending item pertained to the First Wilderness Heritage Corridor (FWHC) Event Coordinator, that would be funded in part using Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) grant funds. He advised that the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the contracted position had been approved at the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee meeting and occupancy tax funding would be used to provide matching funds for the grant. He added that he had provided a scope of services to the Purchasing Department for the preparation of the RFP. Mr. Sokol asked what the local share was and Mr. LaMothe responded that \$28,000 would be allocated from occupancy tax funding and \$35,000 would be allocated from LWRP grant funding. Mr. Belden questioned what would happen with the position once the grant funding was depleted and Mr. LaMothe responded that it would be a contracted position with a year to year contract. Mr. Champagne said that if the Event Coordinator did not effectively increase the number of events held in the FWHC in the first year, the contract should not be renewed for the second year. Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal Services, asked if the contract would terminate on December 31, 2009 and Mr. LaMothe responded that the contract would terminate one year from the date of commencement.

Brief discussion ensued.

Referring to the third pending item, Mr. LaMothe said the status of the Department of State funding for the Stony Creek Railroad Station Platform had been resolved and the contract extension was in progress. He advised that the contract involved a Memorandum of Understanding with the Town of Johnsburg for implementation, as the County could not be the direct recipient of the funds. He stated that he had discussed with Paul Butler, Director of the Parks, Recreation & Railroad Department, the need to install handicapped ramps at the railroad stations in the Towns of Riparius and Hadley. Mr. Belden stated that the County had expended \$500,000 for the construction of the railroad platforms and he questioned why handicapped ramps had not been included in the design plans. Mr. LaMothe responded that the County had purchased the railroad station in the Town of Riparius and noted the existing ramp was not ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant.

Following a brief discussion, motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Champagne and carried unanimously to refer the issue of the covered platforms at the railroad stations in the Towns of Riparius and Hadley that had not included ADA compliant handicapped access ramps to the Public Works Committee.

Ms. Tatich apprised the Committee that the fourth pending item pertained to a vacancy on the Warren County Planning Board. She noted that the vacant position was for a representative from the Town of Bolton and added that she had spoken with the Town Supervisor about a replacement. She advised that if a representative from the Town of Bolton was not appointed, she would recommend an alternate from the Town of Horicon or the Town of Hague.

Ms. Tatich requested authorization to submit an application for grant funding to the New York State Affordable Housing Corporation, in the amount of \$160,000 to assist with housing rehabilitation under the HOME Program. She said that there were no administrative funds available; however, she added, the funding would be used in conjunction with the existing HOME Program. Mr. Belden asked if local matching funds were required and Ms. Tatich replied in the negative.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to authorize the submission of an application for grant funding to the New York State Affordable Housing Corporation, as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 20, 2009 Board meeting.*

Ms. Tatich requested authorization to pay the 2009 expenses of the Warren County Local Development Corporation (LDC), in the amount of \$21,000. She said that the LDC had completed a similar contract agreement.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to authorize the payment of the 2009 expenses of the Warren County LDC, as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 20, 2009 Board meeting.*

Mr. LaMothe requested a transfer of funds in the amount of \$5,000 from the RESTORE - Contract Code (CD67 8668 470) to the RESTORE - Consulting Fees Code (CD67 8686 437). He explained that they had originally applied for \$75,000 in funding and had been awarded \$125,000. He said that when they had applied there had not been administrative funds available; however, he added, when the State had increased the award to \$125,000 they had included \$5,000 for administrative funds. He stated that when he had first appropriated the funds he had been unaware that \$5,000 had been included for the purpose of administrative funds.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve the request for a transfer of funds, as outlined above and to refer the same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. LaMothe noted that a 2008 GIS (Geographic Information System) Summary Report had been included in the agenda packet. He said that there had been 83 non-government requests in 2008 and added that the Department had also provided technical services to municipalities within the County. He explained that there had been 166 total requests, 93 of which had been governmental requests. He advised that the total revenue had been \$1,311.75 and that there had been 245 E-911 address requests, which had required 334 man-hours.

Mr. LaMothe reported that a GIS Services Pricing List had been included in the agenda packet, which was effective January 1, 2009. He said that the pricing structure had been developed by considering the price of materials, as well as comparable service prices from other municipalities. Mr. Taylor advised that the Board of Elections charged \$10 for a CD-ROM and he suggested that the County should be consistent with the amount charged for like services regardless of the Department.

Following a brief discussion on the 2009 GIS Services Pricing List, motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Pitkin and carried unanimously to table the discussion until the next Committee meeting.

Ms. Tatich stated that the next item on the agenda pertained to the Broadband Project. She said that an amount of money had been earmarked for the purposes of a Broadband Study in 2008. She added that the intention had been for the County to independently contract with a

company to perform the Broadband Study. She advised that at one point the possibility of uniting with other counties in order to achieve a broader study had been discussed. She said that there had also been discussions pertaining to a request to the Department of State for shared services funding. She apprised the Committee that she had contacted Howard Lowe, of CBN Connect, and it had been determined that the criteria for shared services funding had not been met. She said that the County needed to determine what was being accomplished and which direction they wanted to take next. She advised that she had completed an internet search on the subject of broadband and had provided a Rural Internet and Broadband Policy Group report in the agenda packet. Chairman Monroe reported that he had discussions with the Director of the Office for Technology and had been informed that there was an interest in doing something in this area. He said that he had asked if funding would be available through the Economic Stimulus Package enacted by President Obama and had been informed that funds were available for the construction of a broadband network; however, he added, there were no funds available for the broadband study. Ms. Tatich suggested that it would make sense to broaden the area and combine resources with another county in order to complete the study and to apply for technical assistance funding jointly. Chairman Monroe advised that the County needed to move forward on the Broadband Study in order to be eligible for the Economic Stimulus funding when it became available.

Following a brief discussion, motion was made by Mr. Pitkin, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to authorize the preparation of an RFP for the Broadband Study and to inquire with adjoining counties to determine their interests.

Ms. Tatich stated that the next item was to discuss the requested involvement of the Planning & Community Development Department in the development of a Hazard Mitigation Plan. Mr. Taylor suggested that Ms. Tatich contact representatives from the Office of Emergency Services to determine the scope of work to be completed. Chairman Monroe apprised the Committee that the Department of Public Works (DPW) had an employee who was trained in Hazard Mitigation. He advised that the deadline for submission of the plan was March 17, 2009 and added that a letter had been sent to the Town Supervisors requesting them to identify their hazard mitigation needs. Mr. Taylor reported that the Hazard Mitigation Plan had been initiated with DPW and was referred to the Office of Emergency Services, prior to being referred to the Planning & Community Development Department. Mr. Payne stated that they had reviewed the agreement with the consulting firm and determined that \$37,000 had been paid and the only accomplishment had been the letters that were sent to the Town Supervisors. Mr. Belden said that the grant had been for \$100,000 and if \$37,000 had been paid to the consulting firm, they should request that a representative attend a meeting to discuss their progress. Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, advised the the contract was with Friends of the North Country and that they had attended a Board meeting a few months ago and distributed information to the Board members. Mr. Taylor suggested that a meeting be scheduled to develop a plan to proceed with the Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to meet the submission deadline. Mr. Payne stated that he would request that a representative from Friends of the North Country attend the Public Works Committee meeting on March 3, 2009. Ms. Tatich questioned the requirements of the grant funding and Mrs. Sady responded that the County was required by law to have a Hazard Mitigation Plan in place.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. Pitkin and carried unanimously to table the discussion on the Hazard Mitigation Plan and request the attendance of a representative from

Friends of the North County at the Public Works Committee meeting.

Mr. LaMothe requested to establish Capital Project No. H297.9550-280 - Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial Grant, in the amount of \$45,000, with grant funding from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Mr. Belden questioned what the grant funding would be used for and Mr. LaMothe responded that it would be for signage and kiosks for the Towns in celebration of the Quadricentennial.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to establish Capital Project No. H297.9550-280 - Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial Grant and to refer same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. LaMothe requested the consent of the Committee to authorize the preparation of the RFP for design services with regards to the Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial. He said that there would need to be discussions with the County Attorney's Office because the way that the grant application had been written, it was intended for a soul source to provide the service; however, he added, the County would be coordinating their efforts with Lakes to Locks Passage.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to authorize the preparation of an RFP for design services regarding the Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial.

Mr. Champagne asked if there was any further information on the Economic Stimulus Package as it pertained to housing projects and weatherization. Mr. LaMothe responded that there had been funding announcements earlier this year for various programs which included the HOME Program and the Weatherization Program. He said that at the workshop it had been announced that if the Economic Stimulus Package was passed, additional funds would be available although the amount was unknown at this time. Chairman Monroe advised that he had received a report that stated that there was \$404 million for the Weatherization Program in New York State.

Brief discussion ensued.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Len Fosbrook, President of the Warren County Economic Development Corporation (EDC), who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Fosbrook requested a resolution in support of the continuation of the New York State Empire Zone Program. Jennifer Switzer, Director of Finance/Empire Zone Specialist for the Warren County EDC, said that there had been so much anticipated change with respect to the program that many of the Zone Coordinators throughout New York State were trying to garner support for the continuation of the Program. She advised that the proposed legislation would remove the local control of the Empire Zone. She added that the Local Zone Administrative Board had been opposed by Governor David Paterson. She said that tasks such as reviewing local applications for certification into the Program would become the responsibility of the State. She added that the EDC felt that given the complexities and the diversity of Warren

County, it was best if those responsibilities remained local.

Discussion ensued.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Stec and carried unanimously to authorize a resolution in support of the continuation of the New York State Empire Zone Program. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 20, 2009 Board meeting.*

Ms. Fosbrook said that the next item on the agenda was to discuss the Economic Stimulus Package enacted by President Obama. He advised that the EDC had initially hoped to receive funding for some of the Economic Development Programs. He stated that the projects that had already been approved, such as transportation projects and school building projects, were designated as the key programs. He reported that the EDC had been unable to find a place to promote their programs for infrastructure to industrial sites. He said that \$1.7 million had been included in the Package for Broadband Access and Expansion from the Office for Technology. He added that a number of projects had been approved for Adirondack Community College, the City of Glens Falls School District and some transportation projects. He added that a list of the members of the New York State Recovery and Reinvestment Cabinet, who would make the decisions on where the Stimulus funding was allocated, had been included in the agenda packet. He added that a breakdown of the amount of direct aid to New York State had also been included in the agenda packet.

Ms. Fosbrook reported that the next item on the agenda pertained to the New York State Economic Development Council (NYSEDC) Education Day. He said that the NYSEDC had proposed two pieces of legislation; one of which the Warren County EDC was in favor of and one which they were opposed to. He advised that the Morelle Bill (A.5700) would allow for financing of not-for-profit projects under the Industrial Development Agency (IDA). He added that the legislation had expired a year ago and had not been reintroduced into the IDA legislation. He said that this meant that projects, such as the Glens Falls Hospital Expansion, could not facilitate the IDA to do the bonding or receive the benefits that the IDA could provide. He stated that there was a significant amount of funding in the Economic Stimulus Package for not-for-profit entities and if the Morelle Bill was not passed the funding would be useless in New York State. He said that it was critical that the Morelle Bill be passed as part of the new IDA legislation. He apprised the Committee that the Warren County EDC was opposed to the Hoyt Bill (A.3659), which would modify the IDA legislation to require the payment of prevailing wage rates on all IDA projects. He added that it would also require that the bonding agency pay a cost of living wage (median wage) per hour, which for Warren County was approximately \$15 per hour.

Mr. Fosbrook said that the Public Authorities Accountability Act (PAAA) was a good piece of legislation, that was designed to have more oversight in large authorities, such as the New York State Thruway Authority and the Port Authority. He added that the State Agency that oversaw the EDC and the HRLDC (Hudson River Local Development Corporation) had decided to include them as part of the PAAA. He said that if the EDC was required to follow the legislation, there would be a significant increase to the cost of doing business. He added that the EDC Board members would also be affected due to the training that would be required. He advised that the EDC would discuss the issue at an Executive Committee meeting later that day.

Mr. Fosbrook reported that the National Guard was scheduled to move into their new facility at the Queensbury Business Park at the end of March. He said that the infrastructure was being finalized and the sewer system would be tested this week. He stated that Supervisor Stec and Michael Travis, Superintendent of Highways for the Town of Queensbury, had been very helpful in overcoming some of the obstacles that had arisen. He said that the Queensbury Business Park would be fully completed within the next two months.

Mr. Fosbrook apprised the Committee that the EDC, the City of Glens Falls and Empire State Development were preparing an RFP for the further use of the former National Guard Armory on Warren Street in the City of Glens Falls. He added that this would put the property back on the tax rolls and potentially create additional office space. He said that the RFP would be issued within the next four months. Mr. Taylor inquired about the adjacent lot and Mr. Fosbrook responded that due to the fact that the 15 parking spaces behind the Armory would not be sufficient for office space use, they had inquired about the possibility of purchasing the adjacent lot. Mr. Fosbrook stated that the HRLDC had purchased the adjacent lot and had demolished the building that had been on the property. He noted that the adjacent lot would be sold with the former Armory.

There being no further business to come before the Planning & Community Development Committee, on motion by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. Merlino, Mr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 11:42 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist